Town of Penfield Supervisor’s Column

Week of March 27, 2017

Guest Columnist Rick Giesselman, Director, Department of Public Works

This column comes to you in two parts: Storm Review and Spring Seasonal News

Part I: Storm Review

March has certainly come to Penfield like a lion. On the 8th we experienced one of the highest force sustained wind events in Rochester history with a peak gust of over 80 miles per hour. All DPW crews were hands-on throughout the event. Like many residents, we lost power at the DPW complex and town hall, and were operating both facilities and other sites with backup generators. Our sewer team worked around-the-clock using bypass pumps, generators, and our vactor truck to keep all 20 sewer pump stations working and sewage flowing in the right direction. Thankfully, no one in Penfield experienced a sewer backup.

Highway and parks crews were out with trucks, chainsaws, loaders, and tractors clearing blocked roads and sidewalks. They installed temporary stops at many intersections with traffic light outages and assisted the state and county with road closures so utility companies could work to restore power.

Because of the storm’s severity, the Penfield Town Board extended brush drop-off hours at DPW to seven days a week through March 26 (normal hours resume March 27). UPDATE: Due to the volume of brush debris from the March 8 windstorm, the Penfield Town Board is extending the hours for resident brush drop-off through this weekend. DPW will receive brush* at 1607 Jackson Road this Saturday and Sunday (4/1 and 4/2) from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, both days. Starting Monday, April 3, we will return to normal drop-off hours (Monday–Friday, 7:30 AM–3:00 PM, except holidays). Please call 340-8710 with questions.

*Brush includes trees (no stumps), limbs, and branches. No trash, leaves, or grasses will be accepted.

“Snow Storm Stella” was on the heels of the wind storm, dumping a steady 24 inches of snow, burying storm debris, and complicating cleanup for everyone.

Throughout “Stella,” DPW worked to keep all roads in the town open and passable with 19 trucks continuously deployed to plow and salt their routes. Other loaders and small trucks were used to clear parking lots and doorways. Our parks team cleared primary sidewalks, and DPW clerks fielded hundreds of storm-related calls and relayed dynamic priorities to foremen.

In all, the DPW team worked 1,500-plus hours to keep all local, county and state roads, sidewalks, and town facilities open and passable for emergency responders and residents.

The town board authorized a one-time town-wide brush pickup to assist residents starting this week of March 27. Please check www.penfield.org for details. I urge everyone to remain flexible as we undertake our work. Plans—subject to weather conditions and competing priorities—may change with the circumstances of any given day. We may come to your neighborhood sooner, later, or more often than communicated. Public safety and the safety of our crews will drive our decision-making.

We all hope that Mother Nature is done with the wild weather. Let’s move on to spring news.
**Part II: Spring Seasonal News**

Once winter is truly gone and storm cleanup is finished, we will attend to spring chores like filling potholes, repairing lawn damage from town plows, and verifying, repairing or replacing mailboxes damaged by our plow blades (not snow). We will also repair sidewalk damage, trim trees, and clean storm water drainage ponds and sewer systems.

Need mulch? We will soon be stocking the mulch pile at parking area on Columbus Crossing near the town hall. This is a free service for Penfield residents in partnership with Monroe County DEC. After grinding all the storm debris we should have an impressive supply.

As a reminder, brush drop-off is open to residents year-round Monday–Friday, 7:30 AM–3:00 PM, except holidays.

**Please make note of the following events and activities:**

- DPW will host its annual Spring Drop-off at the 1607 Jackson Road Facility on Friday, May 19, 7:30 AM–5:00 PM and Saturday, May 20, 9:00 AM–3:00 PM. This service is for Penfield residents only. We will accept general household refuse; furniture; metals; appliances; lawn mowers with fluids drained; vehicle batteries; concrete, brush, and tree limbs; and tires (four per resident limit). We cannot accept propane tanks; household electronics including computers and accessories, printers, copiers; TVs; grass clippings and leaves; motorized vehicles; and hazardous materials.
- Our annual Animal Control Rabies Clinic at the DPW Sewer Building, 1607 Jackson Road is June 3, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM.
- Highway will conduct its annual oil and stone treatment program on approximately 13 miles of town roads and micro pave a number of cul-de-sacs. Both processes extend road surface life. Details will be posted at [www.penfield.org](http://www.penfield.org).
- Highway will undertake a paving project in the White Village neighborhood to rebuild and repave areas of roads that were damaged and disrupted during the sewer project which was completed over the last 18 months.
- DPW will continue to work on drainage tasks including the completion of our Four Mile Creek project. Several additional projects are scheduled for the summer season.
- We are working on a few projects to support the town’s goals of becoming more energy efficient. Although we are not doing the installation, DPW has been busy preparing a site on the DPW complex for a new solar array to be installed by Solar City. The agreement with Solar City is a power purchase agreement (PPA). With this PPA, Solar City pays the entire cost of equipment and materials up front and no Penfield taxpayer money is being spent on the project. Over time, the new system will provide approximately 70–75 percent of the electrical usage of our town facilities. We will also continue to convert to street lights to LED and upgrade lighting and playground at Greenwood Park.
- If you are a parent or grandparent, please join us for our popular heavy equipment show for children at the Penfield Public Library on July 13. Watch the library website for details. Children and adults love to see and climb around the impressive DPW heavy equipment. Bring your camera!
- If you need to dispose of household hazardous waste please note the Monroe County Department of Environmental Service (DES) has moved our traditional spring collection to the fall, on Saturday, September 16, 7:45 AM–1:00 PM. The Town of Webster is hosting this year’s event at 1005 Picture Parkway (off Hard Road in Webster). Schedule your required appointment and learn more at [http://www.monroecounty.gov/hhw](http://www.monroecounty.gov/hhw).

We have a wonderful group of dedicated people working at the Penfield DPW. Public safety and the safety of our employees is our highest priority, guiding our decision-making every day.

When you are out driving in your car—whether in a snow storm or on a beautiful summer day—please pay attention to our flag people and follow their directions, and always give heavy equipment and plows the room they need to perform their jobs. We want to ensure that at the end of each day, our valued employees return to their families in the in the same healthy condition in which they reported to work.

Thank you and enjoy your spring and summer!